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THE HANDS OF SHANG-CHI, MASTER OF KUNG FU

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TM



FROM THE BOWELS OF MORDILLO'S
ISLAND THEY COME...THE
BEHEMOTHS!

"Call me Shang-Chi, as my *father* did, when he raised me in the vacuum of his Honan, China retreat. Since then, I have learned that my father is Dr. Fu Manchu, the most insidiously evil man on earth...and that to *honor* him would bring nothing but *dishonor* to the spirit of my name.

Stan Lee
PRESENTS:

MASTER OF KUNG FU!™

Featuring supporting characters created by SAX ROHMER

"WE DESCEND
ON...
MADNESS."

PRISONERS OF THE CROWN

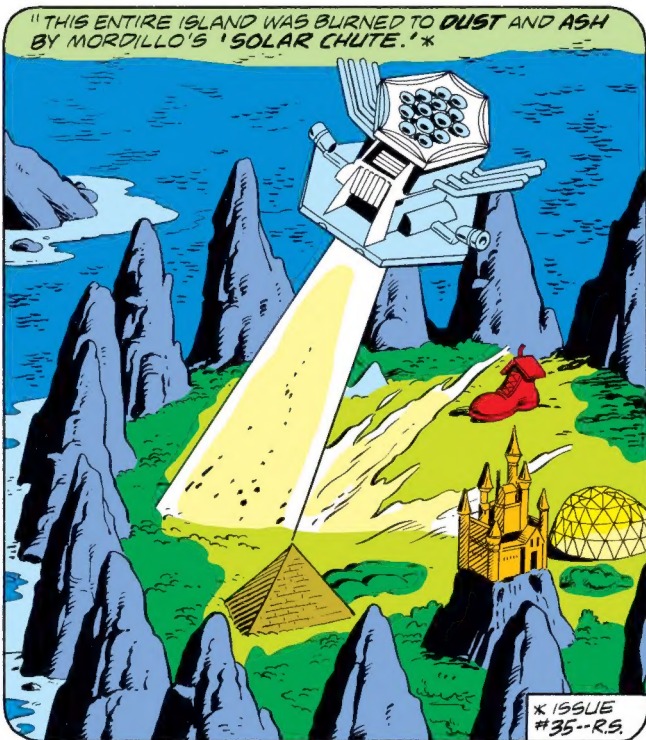
IT'S EVEN
MORE STRANGE
THAN THE FIRST
TIME, SHANG...

"MORDILLO'S
FANTASTIC
ISLAND:
WHERE A
CYCLONE
ONCE RAGED
AT THE
CENTER OF A
MADMAN'S
CROWN."

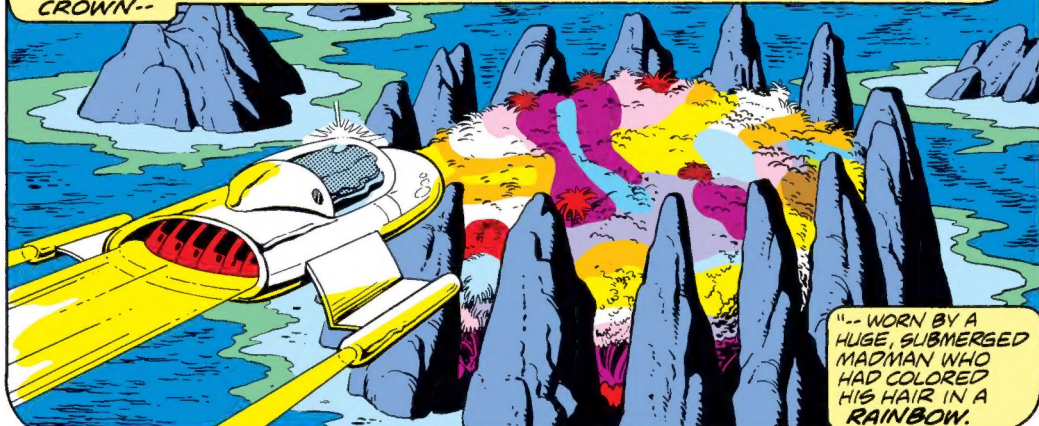
"THE CROWN HAS REMAINED
THE SAME, BUT THAT WHICH
IT CONTAINS AT ITS CENTER
HAS CHANGED..."

"...AS HAS THE IDENTITY
OF THE MADMAN."

DOUG MOENCH / MIKE ZECK / BRUCE PATTERSON / CARL G. / JIM SHOOTER / ROGER STERN
WRITER / ARTIST / INKER / LETTERER / COLORIST / EDITOR-IN-CHIEF / EDITOR



"...EVEN AS WE APPROACHED THE ISLAND ONLY **MINUTES PAST**, THE CHANGE WAS IMMEDIATELY **CLEAR**. SO TALL AND DENSE HAS THE JUNGLE GROWN THAT IT RESEMBLED THE TOP OF A **HEAD**, AND THUS DID THE **ROCK-SPIKES** TRULY TAKE ON THE CAST OF A **CROWN**--



"-- WORN BY A HUGE, SUBMERGED MADMAN WHO HAD COLORED HIS HAIR IN A RAINBOW.

BUT HOW...WHY?

MY GUESS IS THAT WHEN MORDILLO'S SOLAR CHUTE ALLOWED **ULTRA-VIOLET RADIATION** TO BURN THE ISLAND...

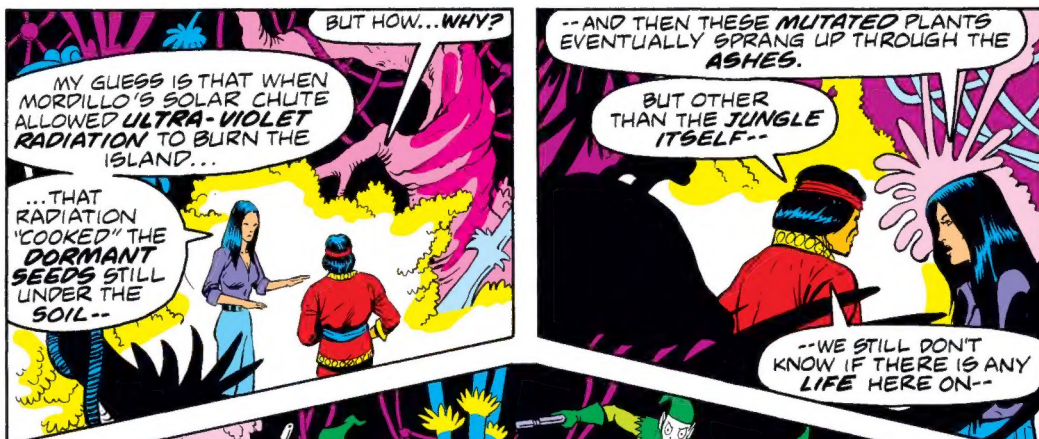
...THAT RADIATION "COOKED" THE **DORMANT SEEDS** STILL UNDER THE SOIL--



-- AND THEN THESE **MUTATED PLANTS** EVENTUALLY SPRANG UP THROUGH THE **ASHES**.

BUT OTHER THAN THE **JUNGLE ITSELF**--

--WE STILL DON'T KNOW IF THERE IS ANY **LIFE** HERE ON--

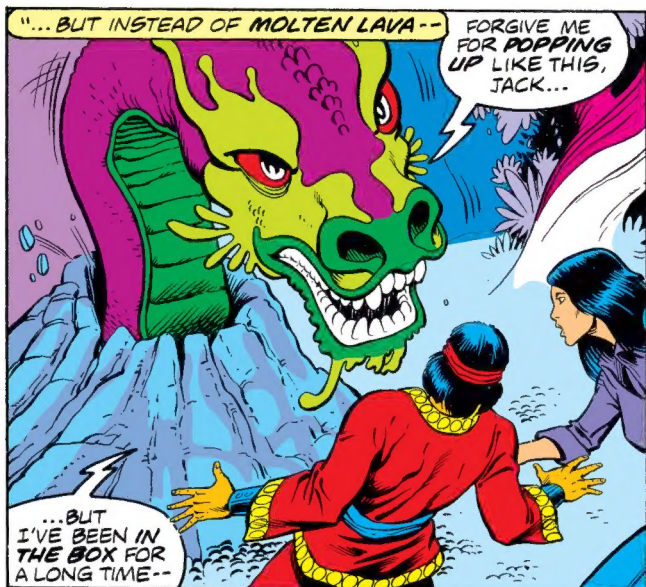
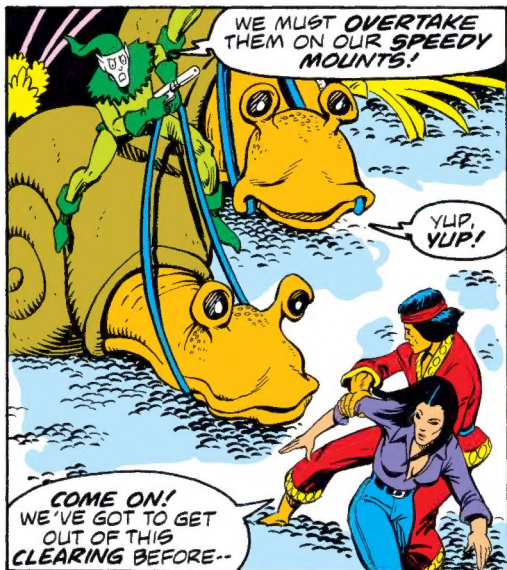


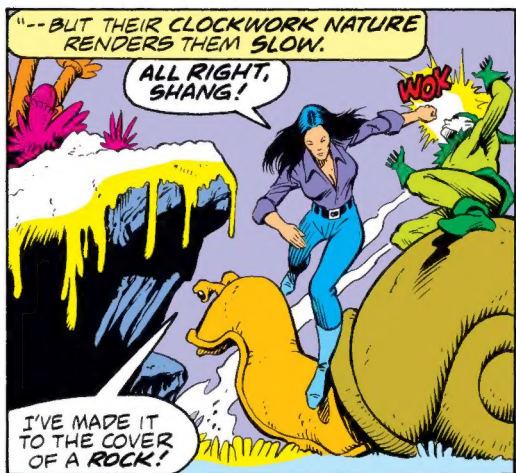
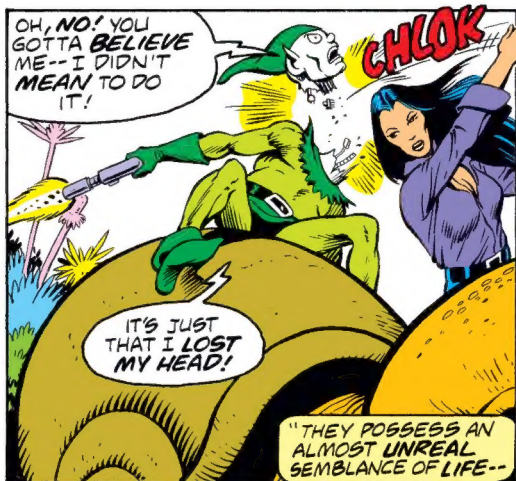
DEATH TO THE INTERLOPERS!

THERE'S YOUR ANSWER, SHANG-- NOW LET'S MOVE!

"THEN, LIKE THE ISLAND'S **VEGETATION**, MORDILLO'S BIZARRE **DEATH-TOYS** HAVE BEEN **REBORN**.

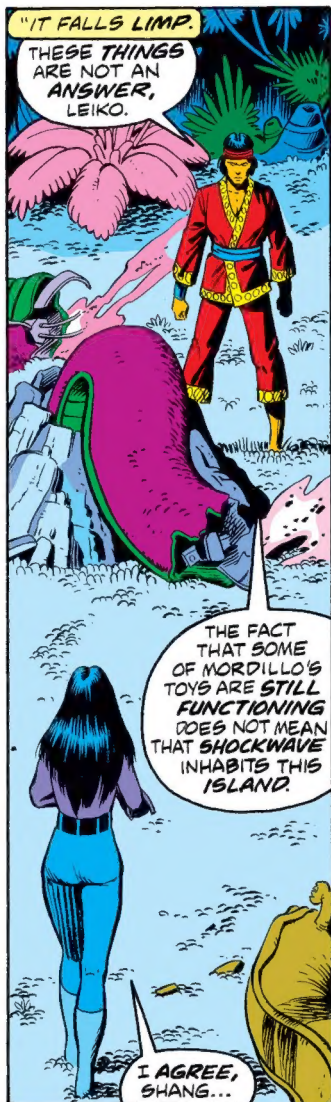








"I DO NOT CARE FOR MORDILLO'S SENSE OF HUMOR..."



"IT FALLS LIMP."

THESE THINGS ARE NOT AN ANSWER, LEIKO.

THE FACT THAT SOME OF MORDILLO'S TOYS ARE STILL FUNCTIONING DOES NOT MEAN THAT SHOCKWAVE INHABITS THIS ISLAND

I AGREE, SHANG...



THESE THINGS COULD HAVE BEEN OVERLOOKED IN THE MI-6 MOP-UP--

--AND COULD HAVE REMAINED OPERABLE WITHOUT CONTROL, STILL OBEYING MORDILLO'S ORIGINAL PROGRAMMING... BUT I DOUBT IT.

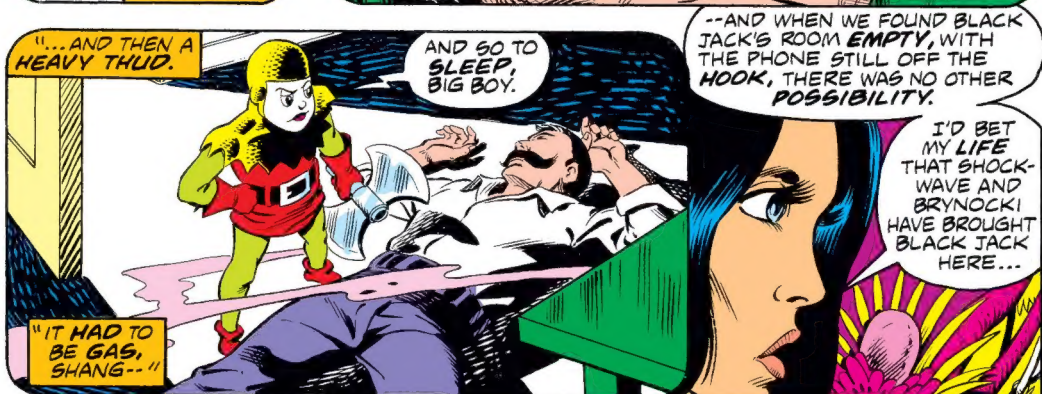
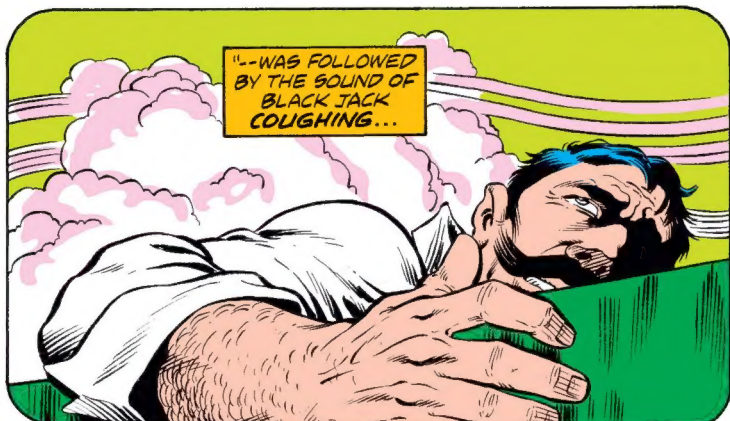
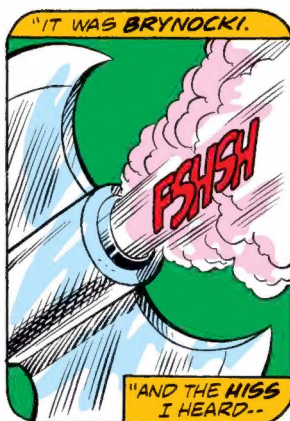
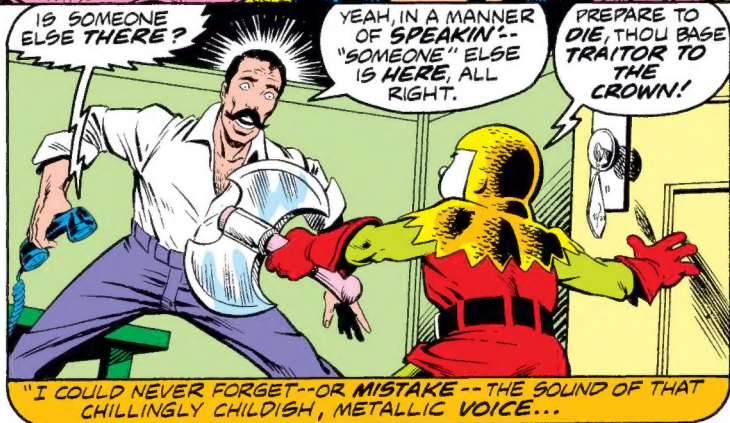
REMEMBER WHAT SIR DENIS SAID WHEN I PHONED BLACK JACK?

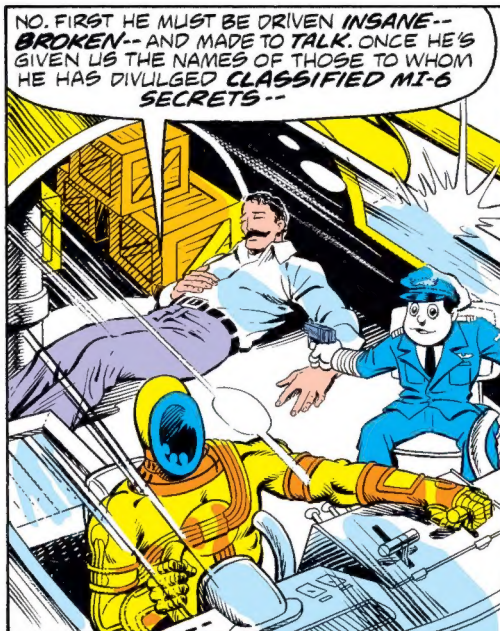
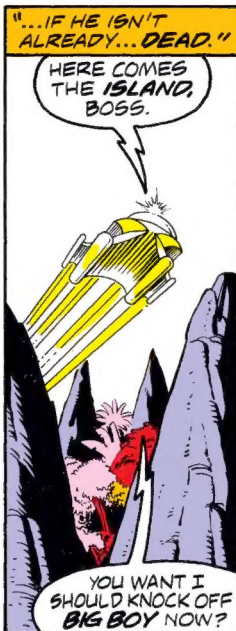


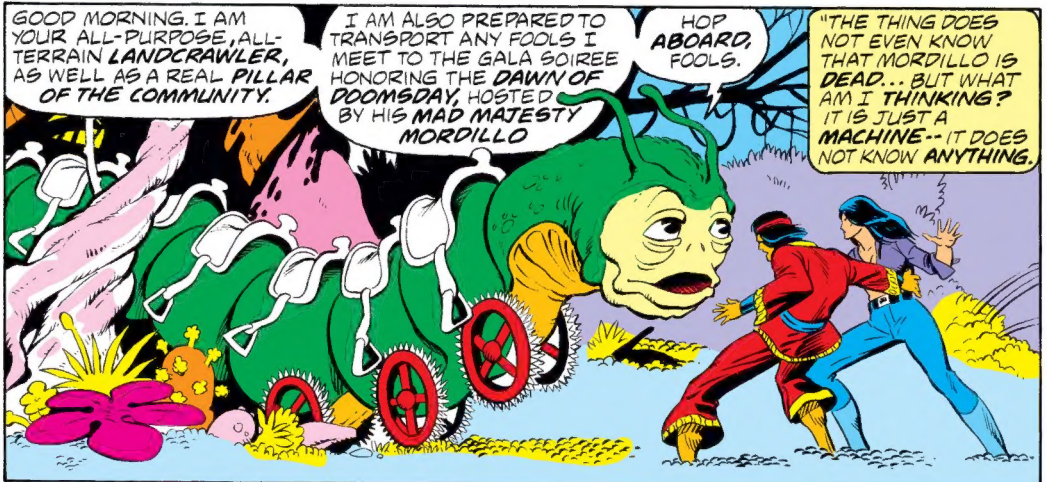
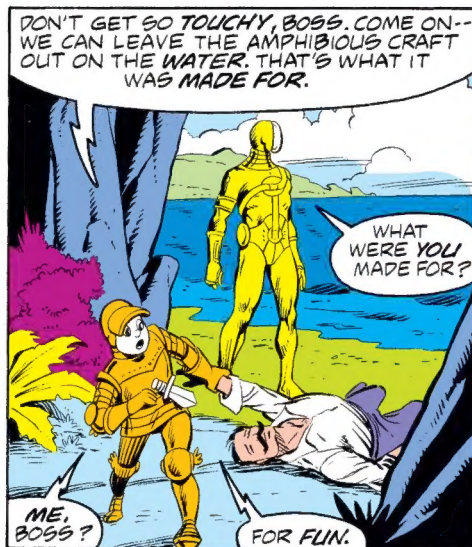
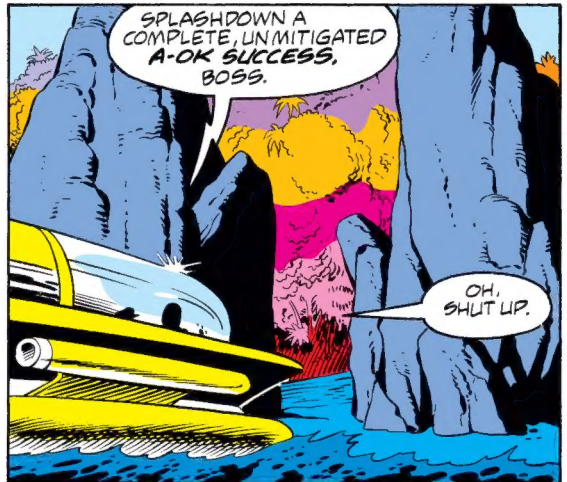
AND TELL BLACK JACK THAT SHOCKWAVE HAS BEEN GIVEN FULL DISPOSAL OF EVERYTHING WITHIN MI-6'S RESOURCES...

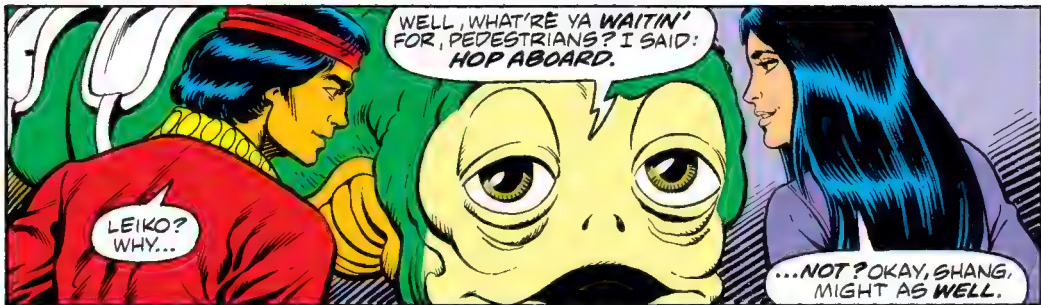


...MEANING: EVERYTHING MI-6 HAS EITHER DEVELOPED INDEPENDENTLY OR HAS CAPTURED-- WHICH, AFTER YOU DEFEATED MORDILLO, INCLUDED THIS ISLAND AND EVERYTHING ON IT.









WELL, WHAT'RE YA WAITIN' FOR, PEDESTRIANS? I SAID: HOP ABOARD.

LEIKO? WHY...

...NOT? OKAY, SHANG, MIGHT AS WELL.

PERHAPS IT'LL GET US ACROSS THE ISLAND FASTER.



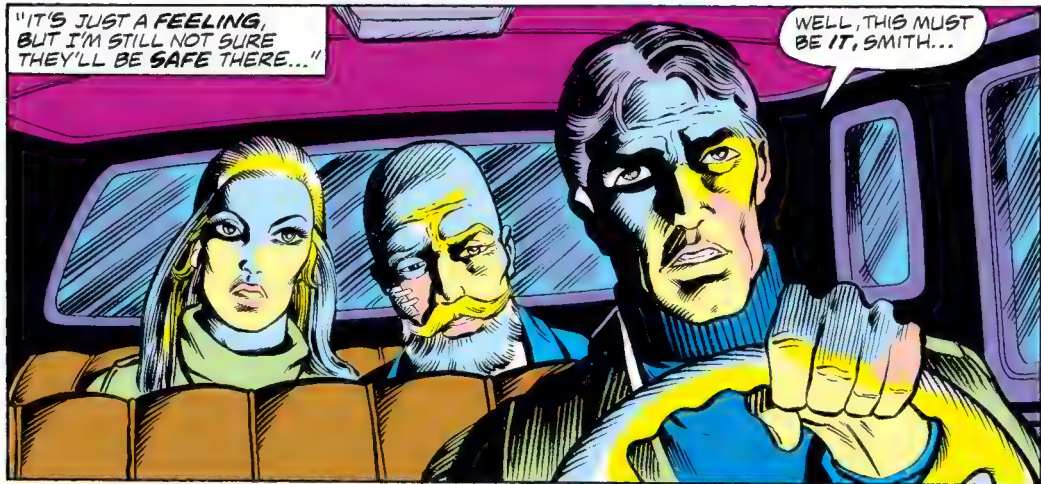
"IT DOES, ADAPTING WELL TO ITS NEW ENVIRONMENT, CONCEIVING NO OBSTACLES..."

"...AND REMINDING ME OF THE 'PUFFERBELLY EXPRESS' RESTON AND I RODE IN THE PAST.



SAYYY, WATCH WHERE YOU'RE GOIN' BUB!

I HOPE CLIVE AND SIR DENIS MADE THE RIGHT CHOICE, SHANG...



"IT'S JUST A FEELING, BUT I'M STILL NOT SURE THEY'LL BE SAFE THERE..."

WELL, THIS MUST BE IT, SMITH...

... A PERFECT SETTING FOR ONE OF MY GREAT-UNCLE'S MORE **CREEPY ADVENTURES**. SURE THERE AREN'T ANY **DEMON-HOUNDS** HAUNTING THESE **MOORS**?



THIS ESTATE HAS BEEN IN THE SCOTTISH SIDE OF MY FAMILY FOR CENTURIES, CLIVE--

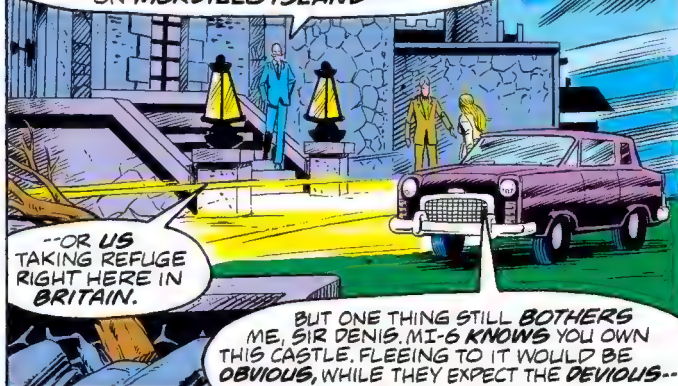
--AND WHILE **NUMEROUS** LEGENDS ATTEND IT, NOT ONE CONCERNS A **SPECTRAL HOUND**.



BUT IS IT SAFE FROM **LESS SUPERNATURAL** PREDATORS? WHY DON'T YOU RUN THROUGH YOUR **RATIONALE** AGAIN SMITH? I NEED **REASSURING**.

MI-6 INCULCATES **DUPLCITY**, CLIVE-- YOU KNOW THAT.

THEY'LL HAVE AGENTS LOOKING FOR US IN MOROCCO, ZANZIBAR, SWITZERLAND, BUT THE **LAST** THING THEY'LL EXPECT IS THE **OBVIOUS**, SUCH AS LEIKO AND SHANG-CHI'S DIRECT ASSAULT ON **MORDILLO ISLAND**--

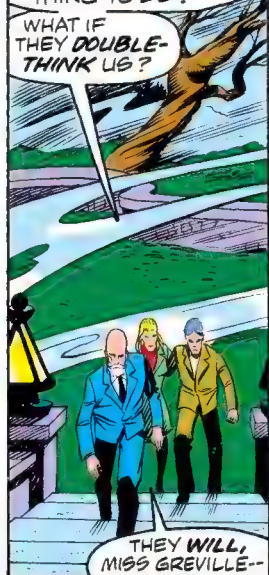


--OR **US** TAKING REFUGE RIGHT HERE IN **BRITAIN**.

BUT ONE THING STILL **BOTHERS** ME, SIR DENIS. MI-6 **KNOWS** YOU OWN THIS CASTLE. FLEEING TO IT WOULD BE **OBVIOUS**, WHILE THEY EXPECT THE **DEVIOUS**--

--BUT WHAT IF DOING THE **OBVIOUS** HAS BECOME THE **DEVIOUS** THING TO DO?

WHAT IF THEY **DOUBLE-THINK** US?

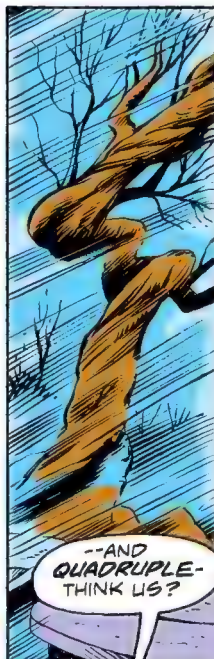


THEY **WILL**, MISS GREVILLE--

--BUT THEY WILL QUICKLY **DISCOUNT** THIS CASTLE WHEN THEY **TRIPLE-THINK** US.



THEN MIGHTN'T THEY GO **ONE STEP FURTHER**--

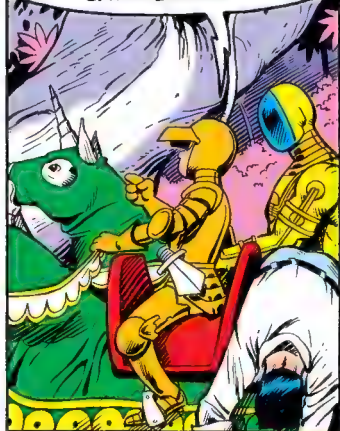


--AND **QUADRUPLE-THINK** US?

"Hmmm... I HADN'T **THOUGHT OF THAT...**"



WELL, HERE IT COMES, BOSS, NEWLY ERECTED BY THOSE WONDERFUL FOLKS AT MI-6 --THE CRANIAL CAVITY CHAMBERS.



OKAY, UNI, DO YOUR VOICE-PRINT STUFF. YOUR WORDS ARE THE KEY.



TALKING UNICORNS-- WITH AN ITALIAN ACCENT, NO LESS.



WHY DO I HAVE TO USE A STINKIN' LUNATIC'S LEFTOVERS?

"WE HAVE NOT YET REACHED THE EDGE OF THE ISLAND, BUT--"

THERE, LEIKO.



YES...I THINK WE SHOULD GO DOWN AND CHECK IT OUT, SHANG.

THANKS FOR THE TIP, BIG SPENDER.

HAW HAW.

"IT IS... GROTESQUE... AND IT WAS NOT HERE BEFORE.

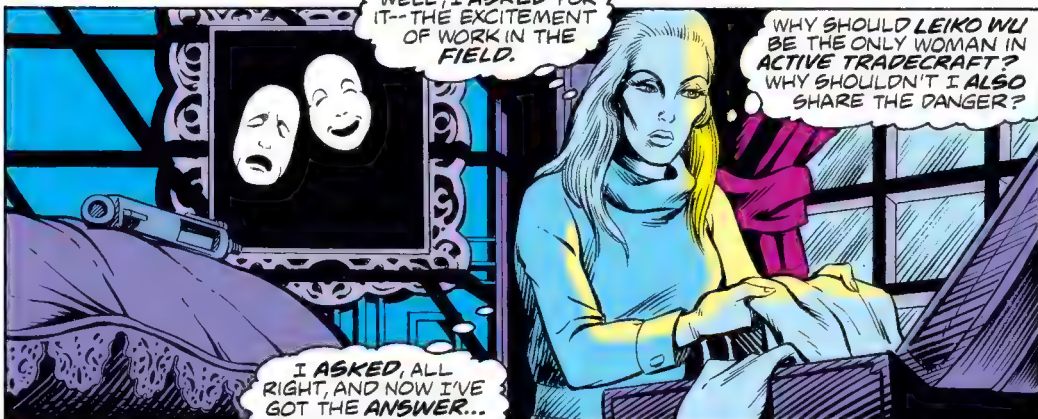
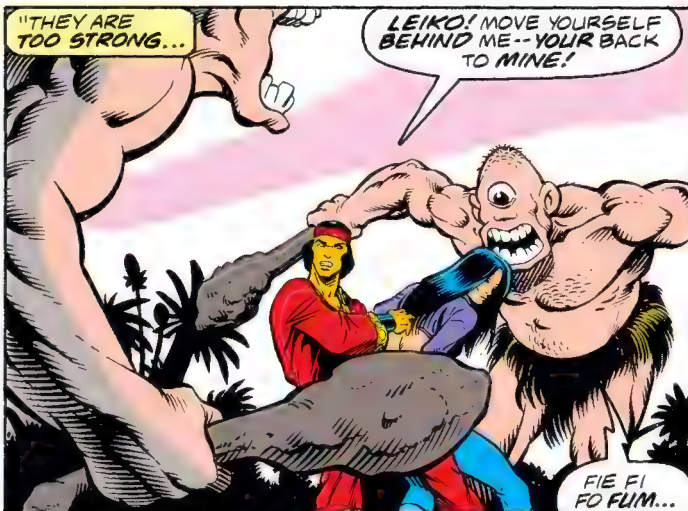
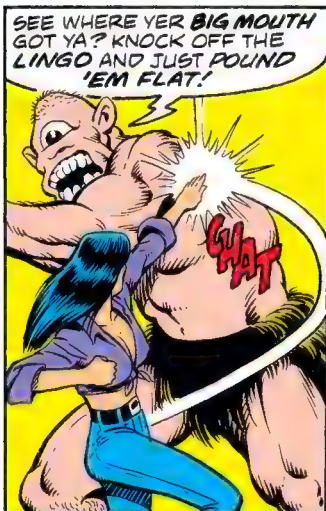
THEN... WE STILL DON'T KNOW IF THE OLD BUILDINGS HAVE BEEN RE-STORED, BUT WE KNOW THEY HAVE ERECTED AT LEAST ONE NEW BUILDING. BUT WHY IN THIS SHAPE?

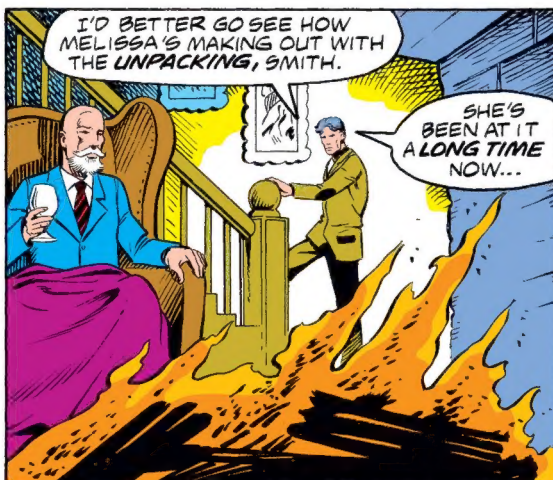
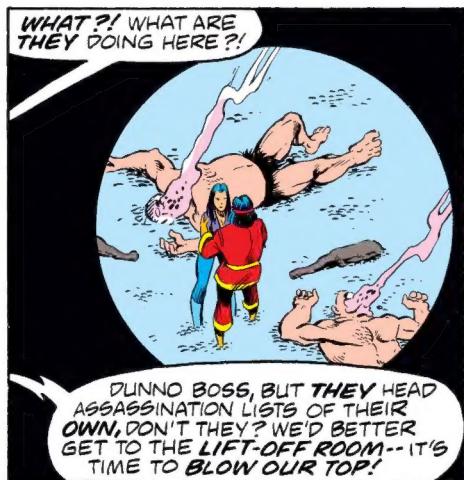
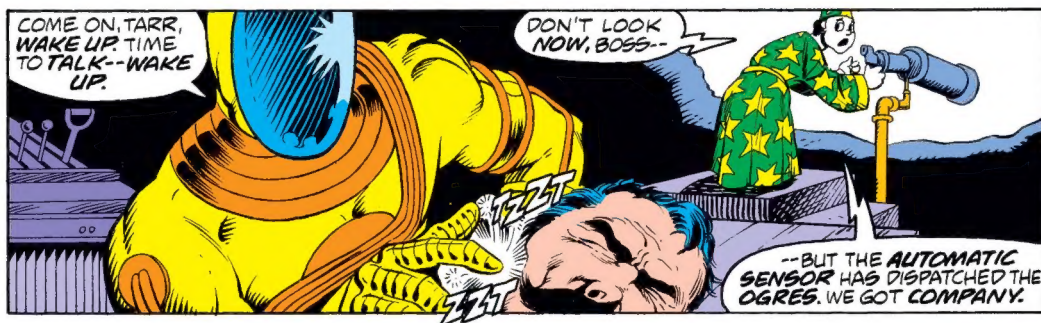


YES, IT'S CERTAINLY NOT IN MORDILLO'S CHILDISH TRADITION. MAYBE IT'S FOR PSYCHOLOGICAL EFFECT, ENGINEERED BY MI-6...

...OR MAYBE SHOCKWAVE IS JUST AS INSANE AS MORDILLO WAS-- BUT IN A MORE CHILLING WAY.









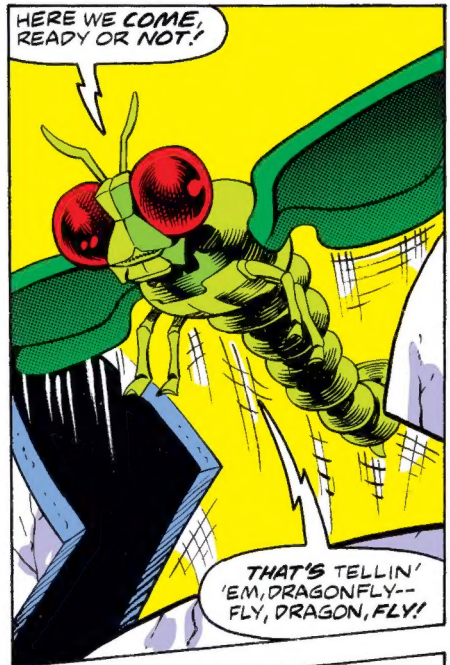
"THAT SOLID... WHAT?!"

OUR TOP IS BLOWN,
BOSS---TIME TO
LIFT OFF!

BRYNOCKI!

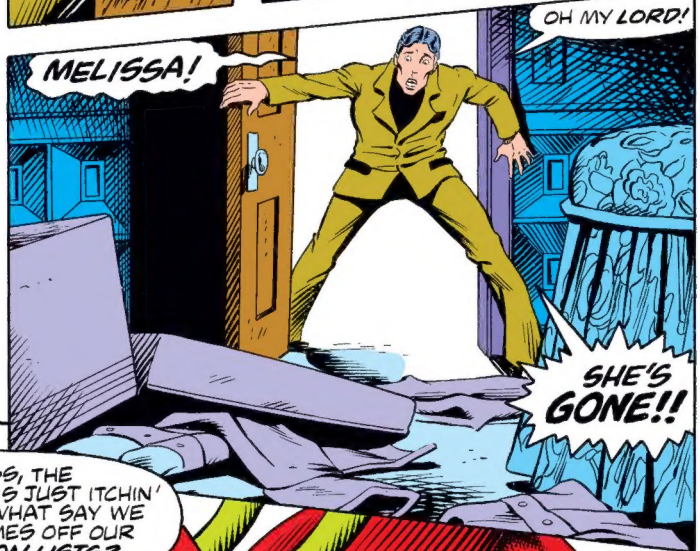


MELISSA...?
ARE YOU IN
THERE?



HERE WE COME,
READY OR NOT!

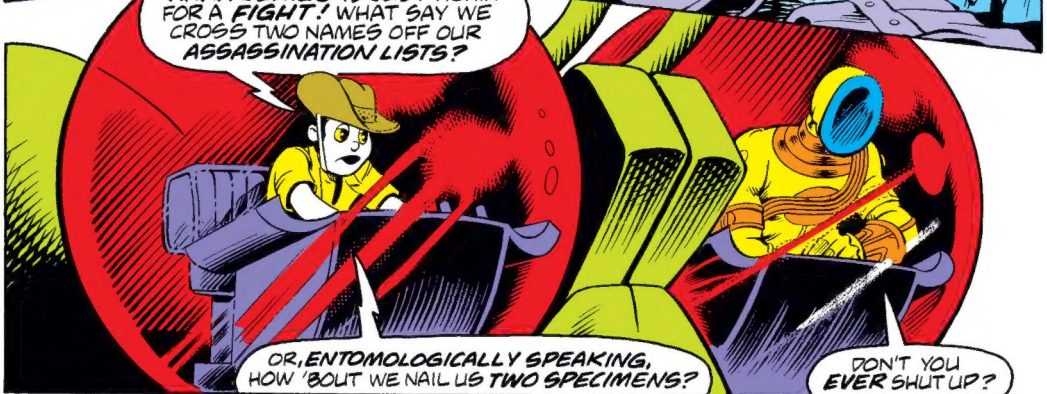
THAT'S TELLIN'
'EM, DRAGONFLY---
FLY, DRAGON, FLY!



MELISSA!

OH MY LORD!

SHE'S
GONE!!



OKAY, BOSS, THE
ANAX JUNIUS IS JUST ITCHIN'
FOR A FIGHT! WHAT SAY WE
CROSS TWO NAMES OFF OUR
ASSASSINATION LISTS?

OR, ENTOMOLOGICALLY SPEAKING,
HOW 'BOUT WE NAIL US TWO SPECIMENS?

DON'T YOU
EVER SHUT UP?



NOPE, NOT WHEN I'M CHARGED WITH MAINTAININ' YOUR MORALE, BOSS.

"WE HAVE DESCENDED IN VAIN SEARCH OF BLACK JACK TARR..."

NOW LET'S HIT IT, BOSS-- EXTERMINATE 'EM FOR THE GLORY OF THE BRITISH EMPIRE!!

MOVE IT, YOU GUYS--MORDILLO'S POPPED HIS CORK AGAIN! ONE OF THESE DAYS HE'S GONNA KILL HIMSELF!

KILL HIMSELF--? WHAT ABOUT US?!

"AND NOW, HAUNTED BY LEIKO'S PREMONITION, MADNESS DESCENDS ON... US."

**NEXT
ISSUE**

THE LONGEST, WEIRDEST, MOST DANGEROUS AND FRIGHTENING GAUNTLET EVER RUN BY MAN, IN--

BRYNOCKI TRIUMPHANT!

MISSIVES TO THE MASTER!

c/o MARVEL COMICS GROUP
575 Madison Avenue
New York, New York 10022

ROGER STERN
EDITOR
JIM SALICRUP
ASSISTANT EDITOR

ANNOUNCING — AT LAST! — THE WINNERS OF THE COMPLEAT COMICS CONNOISSEUR CONTEST

The time has come, People, to wrap up the contest announced in MOKF #61 and based on the story presented in MOKF #59: "The Phoenix Gambit; Part I: The Temples of Time." And yes, the plural "winners" is intentional, as will be explained shortly. But first, to refresh your memories and to finally Reveal All, herewith the original questions coupled with their correct answers. . .

1) The story's true villain is actually *seen* (albeit as a "subliminal visage") as early as page 17. Who is the villain? In which panel does he appear? And from which character's viewpoint is he seen? (Warning: This clue is so subtle and well hidden that even the colorist failed to notice it, so look hard.)



Answers: The story's true villain, at least in the *literal* sense, is of course DR. DOOM. His "subliminal visage" appears in the fifth panel of page 17, seen as "energy dots" on the floor of the dais from Black Jack Tarr's viewpoint. (This was the real toughie, but inadvertently so, inasmuch as Doug prepared the contest questions before he had a chance to see the printed issue. Not only did the colorist obscure the Dr. Doom features, but the inker also partially missed the significant configuration of those dots as rendered in Mike Zeck's pencils. Nevertheless, if you look hard enough—from Black Jack's nearly upside-down viewpoint—it is still possible to discern Dr. Doom's familiar metallic eyeholes, triangular nose, and mouth-gaps. Unfortunately, the fact that Black Jack's black mustache was incorrectly inked/colored white, and his jacket incorrectly colored blue—with the result that he somewhat resembles Nayland Smith—only compounded the confusion. Sheesh! Of all panels for the inker and colorist to make no less than *five goofs*. . .! Ah well, since it was nigh impossible under these circumstances to answer every portion of the contest correctly, we of course will not hold it against you. Indeed, even though all the questions *were* answered correctly somewhere or another among all the entries, no *single* contestant was able to do so. Thus, we are awarding *double* prizes—one set to each of the two entrants who came *closest* to succeeding. Their letters and names round out this page.)

2) What is the double significance of the name "Amar-Tu"? (Hint: One is a partial anagram and the other a bad pun.)

Answers: The partial anagram is RAMA-TUT, allegedly the ancient Egyptian incarnation of Dr. Doom. The bad pun—in a foreign language, no less—is "amor tu" or, roughly, "love to you." And, from page 22, we quote Amar-Tu: "I fill you with. . . *Love*."

3) Cite at least two other clues presented in the story.

Answers: Any of the following clues would have been acceptable. . . 1) The pyramid motif, hinting at Rama-Tut's Egyptian origin; 2) Doom's castle, first seen on page 11; 3) The Prime-Mover's distinctive, hyphenated speech pattern, again first exhibited on page 11; 4) The extensive use of robots, a favorite Dr. Doom ploy; 5) The Prime-Mover's metal hand and the Reston chesspiece, finally seen on page 30; and 6) The title of the story itself—"The Phoenix Gambit"—"gambit" being chess terminology foreshadowing Doom's game as explicitly revealed on page 31 (and previously documented by Jim Steranko way back when), and "Phoenix" referring to Chi's dead foes "returning from the ashes"—and, if not as *robots*, then *how?* (Also, the cover copy and bits of dialogue sprinkled here & there—e.g. in referring to the prior chess match as "lost pieces of the past.")

Okay, those are the answers which, in our agonized judgment, were most closely approximated by the following two entries. . .

Dear Doug and Mike,

1) The story's true villain appears on page 17, panel 5, in the circular grid (foreground), and from Black Jack's viewpoint. If you hold the page almost upside-down, you can see Doom's eyes, nose, and mouth.

2) The anagram connected with "Amar" is "Rama" and the pun on "Tu" is none other than "two." In other words, Rama-Tut the Second.

3) Obvious clues are the castle scenes on pages 11 and 26. Another clue deals with the pyramids, a second reference to Rama-Tut. And the words found on the cover: "Behold! The Angel of DOOM!"

Brian M. Kane

R.D. #2 Box 40

Jeannette, PA 15644

Dear Doug and Co.,

1) The villain of the story is Dr. Doom, yes, but the *true* villain (my italics differing from yours, and *you* write of the insidiousness of Fu Manchu) is DEATH. The panel in which he (it?) appears is the fifth one of page 17. He appears in the dot pattern on the platform and can be seen by rotating the page 135 degrees clockwise. The point of view is a bit tricky; the character is really Black Jack Tarr, although colored as Smith is colored in previous panels. However, lack of a beard and the shorter coat both indicate that this is Black Jack, the choice of his words clinching it.

2) The partial anagram for "Amar-Tu" is "trauma." The pun is that "amar tu" means "I love you" in several languages, and the pun is actually a fairly good one.

3) Other clues were the early glimpses of the Dr. Doom castle on page 11 and page 26. More subtle, however, was the referral to the chess game Doom plays with the Prime-Mover on the first page, in the line: "... flashing lost pieces of the past." Likewise on the first page is the line: "—the dominant image is. . . Death," again (or rather for the first time) naming the true villain of the piece.

Ron Lasner

2206 Garfield S.

Mpls., MN 55405

So, your slightly imperfect answers aside, congratulations, Brian and Ron! Your prizes—an autographed original plot manuscript and an autographed page of original artwork for each of you—are already on the way. Enjoy!

We hope everyone had fun with this contest and, just to close it out, how 'bout a final mini-contest: Can anyone explain the significance of the name "Shen Kuei" as it relates to Shang-Chi's own yin/yang character, and what kind of comparison/contrast between Cat and Chi can be drawn by that significance? (An autographed plot manuscript from Doug to the first reader with the best answer.)